

FGDC FY 2006 WORK PLAN

Agency Name U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Subcommittee or Working Group Wetlands Subcommittee

Background

The Wetlands Subcommittee of the Federal Geographic Data Committee has the responsibilities for the coordination of spatial wetlands data related activities among Federal agencies. It serves as a mechanism for the coordinated development, use, sharing, and dissemination of spatial wetlands data financed in whole or in part by Federal funds or used by Federal agencies.

The Wetlands Subcommittee has been re-launched in July 2005. This annual work plan will be revised by December 31, 2005, to incorporate FY 2006 interim target dates established by working groups launched under this initial work plan and other activities identified by the Subcommittee in its next meeting.

Objectives

The FGDC Wetlands Subcommittee was established to promote standards of accuracy and consistency in spatial wetlands data financed in whole or in part by Federal funds; to exchange information on technological improvements for collecting spatial wetlands data; to encourage the Federal and non-Federal community to identify and adopt standards and specifications for spatial wetlands data; and to collect and process the requirements of Federal and non-Federal organizations for spatial wetlands data.

Benefits or Justification/Legal Mandate

Under the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-16, revised August 19, 2002, responsibility to coordinate wetlands data related activities is assigned to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior. This Federal government-wide leadership for spatial wetlands data coordination is carried out under the auspices of the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC). The Service's pertinent enabling authority resides in the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986. The Wetlands Subcommittee enables the Service to coordinate development, use, sharing, and dissemination of spatial wetlands data required under Circular A-16. This coordination results in the effective and economical use and management of spatial data assets in the digital environment for the benefit of the government and the nation.

Scope of Work

Wetland spatial data describes lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or the land is covered by shallow water part of the year. The wetlands layer of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure also contains related deepwater and riparian habitats.

Milestones, Schedule, and Budget

Action	Date	Lead	Primary Agencies	Budget
Prepare and submit to the FGDC an FY 2005 annual report on the quality and quantity of wetlands data available to the nation, subcommittee accomplishments to date and future plans.	12/31/2005	Bill Wilen, FWS	All	
Develop a draft FY 2006 annual report on the quality and quantity of wetlands data available to the nation, subcommittee accomplishments to date and future plans. (Final report due to FGDC 12/31/2006.)	09/30/2006	Bill Wilen, FWS	All	
Determine and address agencies' highest priorities of actions needed, working from the attached list of Potential Tasks for Working Groups. ATTACHMENT	10/01/2005	Bill Wilen, FWS	All	
Revise and submit FY 2006 Annual Work Plan to FGDC to reflect determined actions.	12/31/2005	Bill Wilen, FWS	All	

Funding Sources or Request: Not applicable at this time.

Points of Contact, Contact Info, and Area of Responsibility

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Working Group Leaders: To be determined

ATTACHMENT

Potential Tasks for Working Groups

Begin development of priority ranking system for national wetland mapping needs, including those of federal and state agencies, conservation organizations, and entities involved in development. Incorporate user-needs assessment.

Develop national strategic plan for wetland mapping for the nation.

Develop mechanism for cooperation/coordination for funding highest priority mapping needs.

Review Wetlands Standards for possible of adding additional modifiers to address concerns by federal and state agencies and others e.g. hydrogeomorphic modifiers.

Create a tiered organization of standards:

1. Organize tiers so that states with different needs and levels of funding can participate at different levels, but still communicate the reliability of their data.
2. Organize tiers so that different areas of a state (rural vs developing for example) can be mapped at different levels of the hierarchy to maximize benefits and minimize costs. For example we may want to use a minimum mapping unit of 1 acre in a rural area, and repeat mapping every 10 years, vs. using a quarter acre in a developing area and repeat mapping every 5 years.
3. Also organize tiers so that you have the same level of confidence in each component in a given level. Eliminate modifiers that are either not used or cannot be reliably identified at any level of the hierarchy.

Develop a guidance document on how to analyze, and revise changes to existing maps. Everyone updating maps or doing status and trends analyses is wrestling with this issue and if it's not addressed, it can lead to erroneous interpretations, and public relations disasters. It also feeds back into the kinds of hydrologic modifiers, and other information that is collected.

Advocate the development of a National Surface Water Map that includes the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) or State Wetlands data, the National Hydrographic Dataset (NHD), watershed boundaries and 100 year flood, floodplain boundaries.

Restart FGDC approval process of Service Riparian Standards as FGDC national standards.

Organize and launch work group to begin development of national system for tracking wetlands conservation projects using a shared cross-agency GIS-based approach similar to the one suggested in *Conserving America's Wetlands: Implementing the President's Goal*. The data would be made available through the National Atlas and Geospatial One-Stop.

This is an expanded version of task above. Organize and launch a work group to explore the feasibility of building a shared cross-agency GIS-based approach to allow agencies to document and exchange information on wetland restoration projects, mitigation projects and permit actions. The data would be made available through the National Atlas and Geospatial One-Stop.

Develop clearinghouse for online publishing of applications of NWI data.

Investigate the use of satellite technology to monitor the existing wetlands data to identify areas where wetlands are being gained, lost or are undergoing change.

Foster technology development to address wetland mapping needs or gaps in information.

Identify training or educational needs for wetlands geospatial data and standards.

Consider the creation of a unique wetlands identifier, like the reach codes. This id needs to remain the same and is unique even if new wetlands are found, and old wetlands destroyed.